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Newsletter

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# NEBRASKA FOREST SERVICE



Nebraska Forest Service

Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources

University of Nebraska–Lincoln

September 1, 2008

Vol. 46, No. 3

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The Nebraska Forest Service publishes **Timber Talk** four times annually (February 1, June 1, September 1, and November 1). The purpose of the newsletter is to serve and promote the forest industry of Nebraska. All questions and correspondence concerning **Timber Talk** should be directed to: Dennis M. Adams, **Timber Talk** Editor, Nebraska Forest Service, University of Nebraska, 109 Plant Industry Building, P.O. Box 830815, Lincoln, NE 68583-0815. Phone (402) 472-5822, FAX (402) 472-2964. E-mail: dadams2@unl.edu. **Timber Talk** is partially supported by University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension funding.

## Lumber Market

### HARDWOODS

**Northern.** Sawmill production has increased this month, primarily due to increased log supplies. Dry weather conditions have promoted consistent logging activity since mid-summer. However, the broad view is that sawmill production is down significantly from the first of the year. Poor markets for grade lumber have forced retraction in the numbers and rate of sawmill output. Indirectly, poor #1C & Btr lumber markets have also diminished the number of active logging operations. Most grade lumber markets are currently facing weak business conditions and are uncertain about business heading into the near future. There is even more reluctance by kiln dried grade lumber markets to act on potential supply shortfalls. Industrial markets are the primary exception, as solid demand for pallet lumber, cants, and ties is readily absorbing low grade material.

**Southern.** The prolonged retraction in new home construction, totalling a 50% decrease over the past two years, has negatively impacted demand for cabinets, flooring, mouldings, and furniture and, therefore, hardwood lumber. Because of fluctuations in buyers' needs, most of which have been continual declines, imbalances often occur between supply and demand. Excess production is especially critical for green lumber during summer months because of high risk of stain damage. Profit margins are thin, if existent at all, and losses from degrade cannot be tolerated. The bright side of the market revolves around heart dimension products, especially 7x9 crossties.

**Appalachian.** The decline in the U.S. housing market began in February 2006. As of July 2008 housing start are down over 50% from February 2006, from over 2 million to 965,000 units. It cannot be overstated how important the U.S. housing market is to the North American hardwood lumber industry. Not only is direct and immediate demand for finished goods impacted, but plans for future business are affected as well. Buyers must adjust purchasing to fit estimated needs. Meanwhile, timber must be purchased well in advance of known business. After several years of historically strong demand for hardwood lumber, only now are logging contractors and mills sawing through the balance of timber that was purchased during the market's heyday. A more cautious approach to timber procurement has since been used, which has limited the availability of sawlogs. Production of green lumber has fallen this year.

(Source: Condensed from *Hardwood Market Report*, August 23, 2008. For more information or to subscribe to *Hardwood Market Report*, call 901-767-9216, email: hmr@hmr.com, website: www.hmr.com)



**NEWS**

# Hardwood Lumber Price Trends—Green

Species	FAS				#1C				#2A			
	9/07	12/07	3/08	6/08	9/07	12/07	3/08	6/08	9/07	12/07	3/08	6/08
Ash	600	600	625	625	440	440	430	430	305	305	325	325
Basswood	695	695	685	685	365	365	355	355	205	205	205	205
Cottonwood	600	600	600	600	400	400	400	400	220	220	220	220
Cherry	2290	2290	2040	2090	1230	1230	985	985	640	640	525	510
Elm (soft grey)	635	635	635	635	420	420	420	420	235	235	235	210
Hackberry	475	475	475	475	455	455	455	455	265	265	265	265
Hickory	735	735	700	690	640	610	560	550	425	425	400	390
Soft Maple (UNSD)	1130	1130	1100	1100	600	600	585	585	320	320	310	310
Red Oak	945	945	945	945	630	630	630	630	500	500	500	500
White Oak	1105	1105	1105	1105	610	610	620	620	400	400	400	400
Walnut	2180	2180	2135	2135	1300	1300	1225	1225	940	940	645	595

Note: Hardwood prices quoted in dollars per MBF, average market prices FOB mill, truckload and greater quantities, 4/4, rough, green, random widths and lengths graded in accordance with NHLA rules. Prices for ash, basswood, elm, soft maple, red oak and white oak from Northern Hardwoods listings. Prices for cottonwood and hackberry from Southern Hardwoods listings. Prices for cherry, hickory and walnut (steam treated) from Appalachian Hardwoods listings. (Source: *Hardwood Market Report Lumber News Letter*, last issue of month indicated. To subscribe to Hardwood Market Report call (901) 767-9126, email: hmr@hmr.com, website: www.hmr.com.)

# Hardwood Lumber Price Trends—Kiln Dried

Species	FAS				#1C				#2A			
	9/07	12/07	3/08	6/08	9/07	12/07	3/08	6/08	9/07	12/07	3/08	6/08
Ash	900	890	890	890	650	650	670	680	580	560	560	580
Basswood	990	990	975	975	605	605	575	575	395	395	395	395
Cottonwood	755	755	755	755	520	500	520	520	—	—	—	—
Cherry	3000	2985	2815	2790	1010	1465	1220	1170	985	960	860	845
Elm (soft grey)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hackberry	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hickory	1200	1185	1130	1100	920	900	900	900	810	790	790	790
Soft Maple (UNSD)	1635	1635	1620	1620	890	870	800	800	540	540	540	540
Red Oak	1500	1435	1375	1375	990	990	975	975	760	760	760	760
White Oak	1720	1720	1700	1700	980	980	960	950	725	725	725	715
Walnut	2905	2905	2905	2905	1875	1875	1800	1800	1555	1555	1220	1165

Note: Kiln dried prices in dollars per MBF, FOB mill, is an estimate of predominant prices for lumber inspected and graded before kiln drying. Prices for cottonwood and hackberry from Southern Hardwoods listings. Prices for ash, basswood, elm, soft maple, red oak, and white oak from Northern Hardwood listings. Prices for cherry, hickory and walnut (steam treated) from Appalachian Hardwoods listings. (Source: *Hardwood Market Report Lumber News Letter*, last issue of month indicated. To subscribe to Hardwood Market Report call (901) 767-9126, website: www.hmr.com.)

# Softwood Lumber Price Trends

Species	Selects <sup>1</sup>				Shop <sup>2</sup>				Common <sup>2</sup>				Dimension <sup>2</sup>			
	9/07	12/07	3/08	6/08	9/07	12/07	3/08	6/08	9/07	12/07	3/08	6/08	9/07	12/07	3/08	6/08
Ponderosa Pine*	1081	717	830	874	313	412	293	394	534	465	402	455	276	266	200	313

\*Rocky Mountain Ponderosa Pine

<sup>1</sup>Selects = D and Btr Selects, Stained Select, Mld and Btr.

<sup>2</sup>Shop = 4/4 Factory Select - #2 Shop.

<sup>3</sup>Common = #2 and Btr Common.

<sup>4</sup>Dimension, Timbers and studs = Std and Btr, #2 and BTR Dimension and Timbers.

Note: Average Softwood prices quoted per MBF rounded to nearest dollar, FOB mill, KD. This information is presented to indicate trends in the softwood lumber market. Actual prices may vary significantly from prices quoted.

(Source: Excerpt from *Inland Grade Price Averages*, Western Wood Products Association (WWPA) for the month indicated. To subscribe contact WWPA, phone: 402-224-3930, website: [www.wwpa.org](http://www.wwpa.org)).

# Timber Stumpage Prices

The Nebraska Forest Service does not have a reliable system of collecting data on timber stumpage prices paid for Nebraska timber. Since current timber stumpage price information would be useful to landowners, loggers, sawmills and forester's in Nebraska, timber stumpage price information will be summarized from selected states and periodically presented in Timber Talk. Although this data is not collected from Nebraska timber sales, it may serve as a general guide in tracking stumpage trends. Prices quoted in \$/MBF.

Species	(1) Illinois (Nov. 2007 - Feb. 2008)		(2) Missouri (April - June 2008)	
	Sawtimber	Veneer	Sawtimber	Veneer
Ash	50-300 (140)			
Basswood	50-150 (90)			
Cherry	250-600 (410)	500-1200 (820)		
Cottonwood	30-100 (70)		40-65 (55)	
Elm	30-100 (80)			
Hackberry	30-100 (80)			
Hickory	50-200 (130)		40-50 (50)	
Soft Maple	100-250 (130)		140-165 (145)	
Red Oak	150-550 (230)	200-800 (480)	40-85 (65)	
White Oak	150-500 (370)	400-2000 (1250)	40-60 (45)	665-665 (665)
Sycamore	30-100 (80)			
Black Walnut	300-800 (630)	800-4000 (2100)	415-415 (415)	625-2960 (1565)
Redcedar				

(1) Source: Illinois Timber Prices. Stumpage price range for Sawtimber reported from the Prairie Unit (Zone 3). Sawtimber price average, in parentheses, and veneer price range and average reported from Statewide statistics. Doyle Scale.

(2) Source: Missouri Timber Price Trends. Stumpage price range and average, in parentheses, reported from North statistics. International 1/4" Rule.

## Bumper Sticker Wisdom

*All of us could take a lesson from the weather.  
It pays no attention to criticism.*

## Geometry Of A Saw Cut

A saw, when cutting safely, must be sharp. In order to make a cut, a material must be fed into the moving blade. Each moving blade, whether it is a circular saw, band saw or a reciprocating saw, cuts based on this common feature. Another important feature of a saw blade is the geometry of the individual tooth. Whether hollow ground, spring-set, swage or hardened tooth, the geometry of the teeth will dramatically affect the efficiency and performance of a cut.

### Angles

The geometry of a saw tooth is viewed at several different angles. The measurable angles viewed on the profile side of the saw are called hook angles (positive or negative), clearance angles and sharpness angles. They all are measured using an imaginary line drawn to the center of the arbor hole (center of the saw). For example, the hook angle is measured from the imaginary line from the saw center to the tooth tip and the face of the tooth (gullet side). The hook angle may be either a positive angle or a negative angle. The larger the hook angle (positive), the easier it is for the saw to rip through material. If the tooth cuts more efficiently, the operator will feel less resistance and have less fatigue overall. In general, rip sawing requires larger positive hook angles.

### Rip Sawing

Rip sawing may take place with the saw above or below the table. In general, the hook angles will be positive. When ripping lumber with the saw above the lumber, the positive hook angles tend to pull the lumber up. This tendency is counteracted by a series of spring-loaded rollers to securely hold the lumber down onto the feed mat. When the saw is located below the table, the tendency is to pull the lumber safely down to the table while providing minimal resistance to the operator. Generally, ripping saws have fewer teeth, allowing for larger gullets. The common number of teeth on ripping saws are 24 to 30 teeth. Compared to other saws, rip-saws will give minimal resistance to the operator.

### Sliding mitre-radial arm saws

On the other hand, sliding mitre radial arm saw cross-cutting hook angles are generally ground to a -5 degree angle. This feature will cause more resistance with the sole purpose of keeping the lumber on the table or against the backstop.

On a non-sliding chip saw or mitre saw, hook angles range from zero to 15 degrees. It is recommended that these saws incorporate a very small hook angled tooth. In this range, the smaller hook angle will keep the stock against the backstop better than the larger hook angle. It should be noted that mitre saws incorporate 60 to 96 teeth, depending on the diameter.

The hook angle used when crosscutting on a table saw is generally a positive 10 degrees or 10 to 15 degrees less than a rip saw blade. The positive hook angle will help to keep the stock on the table, while the increased number of teeth on a crosscut blade will provide a finer finish cut.

### Combination blades

Combination blades are for general duty use and incorporate some of the features of both a rip and crosscut blade. It is generally not the best choice to only rip or crosscut lumber. When the situation requires multiple changeover's from rip to crosscut, a combination blade may be the best approach. The operator should expect more resistance and slightly lower finish quality with combination blades vs. dedicated blade types.

**The final word:** Circular sawing of wood requires attention to detail. The proper saw will be safer, give a better cut or finish, and do the work faster. Sharpen your saws regularly and inspect them before and after every use. Handle with gloves and always "Lock out and Tag out" your machine while changing blades. It is best to change to the proper blade.

*(Source: Wood Digest, January 2008)*

## The Green Scene

Recently I bought a gallon of paint from my local hardware store. While waiting for my purchase to come off the paint shaker, I casually picked up a couple free wooden stir sticks from the counter. I immediately noticed a recognizable logo on the stick proclaiming the product was harvested from a sustainably managed forest. "Wow," I thought, "even paint stir sticks are boasting their environmental friendliness." I was quickly brought back to reality, however, when I asked the paint department worker, "Do you know what this green symbol and message on the stick means?" With little hesitation, she said, "I have no idea!" And not surprisingly, she didn't seem to care either.

This incident would not have happened back in the 1970s when I started my forestry career. Back then, there were few logos and labels on products,—especially wood products—declaring their environmental benefits, earth friendliness, carbon footprint, and so forth. However, the environmental movement of the 1960s was carried over to the '70s, and many people beyond just the fringe element started to ask questions about the actions of society (you and me!) and its impact on the environment. "Green," as some called the movement, was becoming mainstream. Today, according to a recent survey, eight of 10 U.S. adults consider themselves to be environmentally conscious.

Tropical deforestation was the defining issue that pushed "green" into the forefront for forestry and wood products companies. Alarmed at the conversion of tropical forests to non-forest uses, many environmentalists and non-governmental organizations in the 1980s and early 1990s looked for ways to slow or stop this alarming trend. A mechanism known today as forest certification (or "green" certification) was developed in the 1990s to address the tropical deforestation issue. The movement quickly spread to temperate forested regions like Europe, the U.S., and Canada.

Today, forest certification is just one of the many "green" aspects impacting the forestry and wood products community. Some readers of this magazine are likely well versed in "green" as it relates to their woodlot or business. Others, however, might be like the paint department employee noted



above—not sure what all of this “green” really means, and perhaps are not sure why it even matters.

(Source: *Independent Sawmill and Woodlot Management*, Feb. 2008. Article by Stephen Bratkovich, Forest Products Consultant, St. Paul, MN)

## Study: Some Sunscreens Overpromise Protection

**NEW YORK (CNN)** — Michelle Crawley says she’s a “freak” about putting sunscreen on her two girls.

“They are both pretty fair skinned,” says the West Chester, Ohio, mother of two. So every time Emily, 6, and Claire, 3, go out into the sun, she slathers them with SPF 30 or higher.

But during a recent trip to Key Largo, Florida, Crawley’s vigilance wasn’t enough.

“I wasn’t sure if it was my technique, the sunscreen or being in Florida,” Crawley said, but “that evening they were just fried beyond belief.”

Slathering on sunscreen has become as much a part of the summer ritual as the vacation itself, but a consumer advocacy group has a warning for parents like Crawley who think they’re protecting their family with sunscreen: You may be getting burned.

The Environmental Working Group, a Washington-based nonprofit, has released an investigation of nearly 1,000 brand-name sunscreens that says four out of five don’t adequately protect consumers and may contain harmful chemicals.

The group says that some of the products of the nation’s leading brands -- including Coppertone, Neutrogena and Banana Boat -- are the poorest performers. Coppertone was named by the Environmental Working Group as having 41 products that failed to meet the group’s criteria for issues ranging from failing to protect adequately to containing potentially harmful ingredients to making unsubstantiated claims.

But in a statement to CNN, the company says it “rigorously tests all its products in the lab and in the real world” to ensure that they’re safe and effective. Makers of Banana Boat, which also failed to meet the Environmental Working Group’s standards for various reasons, did not respond to CNN’s requests for comment.

Neutrogena says its sunscreen products have been “embraced by dermatologists and consumers for their efficacy” and says its new Helioplex technology provides broad-spectrum UV defense against sun damage.

The science of sunscreens is simple: Active ingredients are compounds that absorb, reflect or block ultraviolet light. Sunscreens are regulated by the Food and Drug Administration not as cosmetics but as over-the-counter drugs. Sunscreens are rated based on their SPF, or Sun Protection Factor. The higher the SPF, the better the protection against sunburn.

The Environmental Working Group says that the SPF rating on a sun product is only part of what consumers need to know and that one of the biggest problems with sunscreens is that they don’t fully protect against sunlight.

A good, effective sunscreen must prevent against a broad spectrum of rays,” said Sonya Lunder, a senior researcher at the Environmental Working Group.

Sunlight is composed of two types of ultraviolet light:

UVB rays, which cause sunburns, and UVA rays, which tan. Although both may increase the risk of skin cancer, sun damage and wrinkles, the FDA doesn’t require sunscreens to protect against both, just UVB.

The FDA acknowledges that new rules mandating UVA testing and labeling requirements are being evaluated, but the Environmental Working Group wants tougher standards now.

“The fact most sunscreens still don’t offer UVA protection and the fact the FDA has been working for years to finalize its rules is really what provoked us to look at this issue,” Lunder said.

Another issue: Is a key sunscreen ingredient safe?

Oxybenzone is a popular UV filter in many sunscreens, one evaluated by the FDA as safe. The Environmental Working Group says its analysis of hundreds of studies of more than a dozen sunscreen chemicals finds that oxybenzone can penetrate the skin and pose health concerns, anything from hormone disruption to cancer.

The industry group representing sunscreen makers denies that oxybenzone causes harm and deems such claims irresponsible.

“Questions about the safety of oxybenzone unnecessarily alarm consumers,” said John Bailey, the chief scientist for the Personal Care Products Council, which offers its scientific information about the safety of sunscreen ingredients online.

“Safe sun” has always been a priority for the American Academy of Dermatology, which sees sun overexposure as the single most preventable risk factor in the more than 1 million new cases of skin cancer expected to be diagnosed in the United States this year.

Although dermatologists agree that broad-spectrum sun protection is important, some experts see an even bigger sun danger if people perceive that their sunscreen isn’t safe.

“We’re concerned this will raise unnecessary confusion and cause people to stop using sunscreen,” said the Skin Cancer Foundation, a nonprofit group dedicated to educating the public about sun safety. “Consumers should rest assured that sunscreen products are safe and effective when used as directed.”

While sunscreen effectiveness is debated, all skin experts agree that how a sunscreen is used is just as important as what kind of sunscreen is used. Dermatologists say that an ounce of sunscreen should be applied to all exposed areas 30 minutes before going outside and should be reapplied every two hours, or immediately if you swim or sweat.

Common sense can also protect from the sun. Experts agree that children under 6 months old should be kept out of direct sun. Children need sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher.

If you are sensitive to sunscreen, never go without. Instead, try sunscreens that provide a physical barrier, such as zinc oxide or titanium dioxide. New micronizing technology makes both appear more transparent on the skin, so you don’t have to look like a lifeguard with a white nose.

After her girls were sunburned, Crawley bought aloe and sun shirts, which they wore for the rest of their Florida trip. She is frustrated some consumers may not be getting the protection they think they are when they buy sunscreen.

“I think it’s disappointing if you are putting your trust in these companies,” she said. “Someone needs to be keeping an eye on it to make sure they are meeting their claims.”

Source: [CNN.Com/health](http://CNN.Com/health)

# Nebraska Forestry Industry Spotlight



## SANDHILLS INDUSTRIES



Sandhills Industries, which is part of the North Platte Opportunity Center, has been in operation since 1981. The main purpose of Sandhill Industries is to teach job skills to developmentally disabled adults.

Currently, 10 workers produce primarily pallet lumber, tree stakes, grade stakes, hub stakes, surveyor stakes, specialty pallets, and custom resawing. Mostly white wood 2x4's, and cottonwood cants 4x6 and some oak are used in the production of pallets and stakes.

The major mill production equipment includes chop and radial arm saws for cutting to lengths, a pencil point pointer for the tree and hub stakes, and a Baker Resaw for cutting boards out of the cants and stakes out of the white woods and oak.

As technology and regulations change, e.g. heat treat-



Some of Sandhills Industries work force.

ing pallets and GPS systems replacing the hub stakes, the demand for pallets and stakes has decreased the last few years. Sandhill Industries has begun to diversify by collecting used pallets to ship pallet repair shops and repair some pallets for truckers. Some wood is also reclaimed for use in other products.

Sandhills Industries is looking for markets for waste sawdust and scrap wood. Currently some is given away, but the rest goes to the landfill.

As things change Sandhills Industries is looking for additional products to produce or more custom resawing.

Sandhill Industries may be contacted at: Sandhill Industries, c/o Don Evans, 1014 E. 8th, PO Box 729, North Platte, Ne. 69103. Phone: 308-534-3000, email: sandhillsindustries@yahoo.com

## The Trading Post

**T**he Trading Post is provided as a free marketing service for forestry industry. Only forestry-related advertisements will be accepted. Please submit written ads to the *Timber Talk* editor at least 15 days before scheduled *Timber Talk* publication dates. Ads may be edited to meet space constraints.

### For Sale

**Corely Circular Sawmill.** Needs restoration. Includes one 52 inch and one 50 inch insert style blades and Model D4600 cat power unit, \$2000. Call 402-472-2504 days or 402-472-3763.

**Reeve Circular Sawmill.** Includes power unit and two 48-inch insert tooth blades. Contact: R&R Sawmill at (308) 569-2345.

### Wanted

**Logs.** Cottonwood, cedar and pine. 4" to 26" diameter, 90'-100" lengths. Below saw grade logs acceptable. Contact: American Wood Fibers, Clarks, NE at (800) 967-4789; email: mvanskike@AWF.com

**Hardwood Cross Ties and Switch Ties.** Size 7" x 9" - 8' only. **Mixed Hardwood Timbers.** All sizes. **Logs.** C4S, Veneer and C1S, C2S; and C3S logs. Must be able to load 40' containers. Cherry, Walnut, Red Oak, White Oak, Ash, Hard Maple and Poplar logs. **Timbers for Log Homes.** **Car Decking.** Oak or mixed hardwoods. 3"x6"x10'. **Switch Ties.** Oak and mixed hardwood, 7" x 9" - 15', 16', 21', 22', 23'. **White Pine Plank.** #2C, 5 T/LS per month, Rough, green, 1 5/8" x 7 3/8" or 2 1/2" x 9 3/8", up to 1/3 - 8', bal. 10'-16' lengths. 6 1/4" x 12" - 10 to 16'. 4" x 12" rough KD. **Walnut Sawlogs.** Woods run, #1, #2, #3 grades. **Log Inspector** to inspect logs before shipment. **Cross Tie Buyers.** Good incentive arrangements. **Man to Inspect Logs Before Shipment.** Various locations. **Mills to Produce Oak Car Decking.** Surface, drill - oak or mixed hardwoods. Contact: W. Preston Germain, Germain Lumber

Co., Inc., Pittsburgh, PA 15251; 412-782-3240; FAX: 412-781-2551; e-mail: germainlumber@verizon.net.

### Services and Miscellaneous

**Woodshop Services.** Millwork made from your lumber on my planer/molder. Chris Marlowe, Butte, NE 402-775-5000. Marlowepasture@nntc.net.

**Help Wanted.** Equipment operators for rangeland tree clearing service, whole cedar tree grinding, and biomass production located in South Central Kansas. Looking for solid and reliable individuals with clean MVR - CDL preferred, but not required. Must pass pre-employment drug test. Benefits include vacation, sick leave, insurnance, and bonus. Pay dependent on experience. We are a NO smoking business. Apply to Queal Enterprises, Inc., 20501 S Hwy 281, Pratt, KS 67124; 620-672-9325.

**Sawmill Service and Supplies.** Saw hammering and welding. Precision knife and saw grinding. Certified Stihl chainsaw sales and service. Contact: Tim Schram, Schram Saw and Machine, PO Box 718, 204 E. 3rd St., Ponca, NE 68770, (402) 755-4294.

**Used Portable Sawmills.** Buy/Sell. Contact: Sawmill Exchange (800) 459-2148, (205) 661-9821.

**Forest Products Equipment Magazine.** FREE monthly trade publication for the forest products industry. For a sample magazine or free subscription call 1-800-422-7147, email: jfostera@mrpllc or visit the website: www.mrpllc.com and click on Forest Products Equipment Magazine.